

III. REMARKS

The present Amendment and Response is filed in response to the Final Office Action mailed on January 5, 2005. As amended, claims 12-15 – which were previously withdrawn – have now been canceled, without prejudice. Applicants are pursuing the subject matter of claims 12-15 through a divisional application. In addition, claims 16-19 have been canceled, without prejudice, and claim 20 has been amended to place the subject matter thereof in independent form. More particularly, in amending dependent claim 20 to place it in independent form, all recitations of independent claim 16 (from which it previously depended) have been incorporated therein. Reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that claims 1-11 and 21-27 are allowed, and that claim 20 would be allowed if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By way of the present amendments, the application is placed in condition for allowance. Prompt action leading to an early Notice to this effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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